

Conservation Legacy – DOI/OSMRE VISTA program

Living Stipend: AmeriCorps VISTA members receive a living stipend of no less than \$900 monthly before taxes. The living stipend is approximately 110% of the federal poverty level, adjusted for cost of living in the community served.

End of Service Benefits: Upon completion of service VISTAs are eligible for a \$5645 Segal Education Award. VISTAs may select a Cash Award of \$1500 in lieu of the Education Award.

Student Loan Forbearance: Eligible student loans can be placed on forbearance during service. Interest accrued during forbearance period can be paid in full by Corporation for National Service upon completion of service.

Settling In Allowance: Members serving a 12-month term and moving 50 miles or more from their home of record to their project site are eligible to receive a settling-in allowance to cover initial moving expenses. The amount may not exceed \$550.

Relocation Allowance: VISTA candidates approved to relocate for service are eligible for a Relocation Travel Allowance. The allowance amount is determined by the mileage between the VISTAs home of record and the service site; not to exceed \$1,000.

Workers Compensation: VISTA members are considered employees of the federal government for purposes of coverage under the Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA). FECA provides compensation for service related illness or injuries.

Federal Non-Compete Status: VISTA members are entitled to one year of Federal non-compete status for Federal jobs post their year of service. This means that VISTA's will have access to Federal jobs before the public would.

Health Benefits: VISTA members are enrolled in a health benefits package that covers emergency care and some basic preventative healthcare. *This health benefits package does not currently meet the individual mandate requirement of the ACA.* VISTAs are eligible to receive Medicare benefits in some states.

Public Benefits: VISTA members often utilize public benefits like SNAP in order to supplement their living stipend. **Public benefits are not a guarantee** and it is recommended to establish eligibility for these benefits before starting service.

Childcare Assistance: AmeriCorps VISTA offers child care benefits to members who qualify. The maximum amount of child care assistance a member can receive is \$400 per child per month.

Conditions: Supplementary employment during the service year must be approved by the Site Supervisor and Site Coordinator, and **must not** interfere with VISTA service. Conflicts of interest, such as employment at the sponsoring organization, will not be allowed. Please note that supplementary employment may also affect the VISTA member's eligibility for public benefits.

AmeriCorps VISTA members receive a living stipend of no less than \$900 monthly before taxes. The living stipend amounts to a minimum of \$11,136 annually before tax. Upon completing service VISTA members are eligible for either A: \$5,645 Segal Education Award, or B: \$1500 Cash Award. During service VISTA members can place eligible student loans on forbearance. Interest accrued during forbearance can be paid by the Corporation for National Service (CNCS) upon completion of service. VISTAs that are relocating more than 50 miles from their home of record to serve are eligible for settling in and relocation allowances totaling no more than \$1500. VISTAs are considered federal employees under FECA for the purposes of workers compensation claims. VISTAs are enrolled in a health benefits package that covers emergency care and some basic preventative healthcare during service. These benefits do not meet the individual mandate requirement of the Affordable Care Act. VISTAs are typically eligible for SNAP benefits during their service. AmeriCorps VISTA offers child care benefits to members who qualify. The maximum amount of child care assistance a member can receive is \$400 per child per month. VISTAs may not pursue additional income or employment during their service term.

Example of VISTA Compensation:

AmeriCorps VISTA - Income Summary, Ed Award + Relocation		
Income Source	Annual	Monthly
Living Allowance	11,136	928
SNAP Benefits	3360	280
Relocation Allowances	750	/
Ed Award	5600	/
Loan Interest Payment*	2000	/
Total Earned	\$ 22,846.00	\$ 1,208.00
*estimated on 30k student loan debt placed on forbearance for 12 months		

Base Living Allowance - Amount increases in Zip Codes where the cost of living is higher.

Note: SNAP Benefits are not a guarantee – must apply in your state and it is recommended you apply before your service begins. You can also apply after but it varies state by state whether they recognize your stipend as income or not and give you benefits.